

*Newburgh, NY* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the Orange Lake Fire District has been awarded \$299,250 in federal grant funding to purchase new self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) units for its volunteers.

"These federal funds play a vital role in ensuring that volunteer firefighters have the necessary equipment to respond effectively to fires and other emergencies while keeping themselves safe," Hinchey said. "Local fire districts like Orange Lake often require new equipment to meet updated safety standards and protect their volunteers but don't have the necessary resources to purchase them. This grant helps to ensure that our local firefighters have modern equipment that will keep protect them as they respond to emergency calls throughout our communities."

The Orange Lake Fire District will use the federal funds to purchase 60 SCBA units. The new apparatus, which meet safety standards set by the National Fire Protection Association, will replace the older units currently used. Each unit comes with an air tank, face piece and pressure regulator. Orange Lake was previously awarded a federal fire grant in 2005 in order to purchase protective gear for its volunteers.

The funds come from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, which is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the United States Fire Administration (USFA). As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey has worked to secure full funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, since its inception in 2001. Since the fire grant program started, more than \$13 million in grants have been awarded to fire and emergency departments in Hinchey's congressional district.

The congressman has sponsored a number of workshops across his congressional district to help fire departments successfully navigate the grant application process. Hinchey is also the author of the SERVE (Supporting Emergency Responders' Volunteer Efforts) Act, which would provide a \$1,000 federal tax credit to individuals who are active members of volunteer firefighting and EMS organizations.